



The View from the Forge February 2008

Hello, my name is Quinn Kess, Park Guide at Valley Forge National Historical Park. I'd like to welcome you to *The View from the Forge* - a monthly Podcast of news and events from Valley Forge National Historical Park.

Valley Forge contains one of the largest areas of natural meadow in southeastern Pennsylvania – over 1,000 acres. Meadows provide critical habitat for wildlife such as grassland birds and butterflies as well as serving to conserve soils, reduce water run-off, and filter pollutants. Additionally, the gorgeous textures and colors of the grasses, waving in the wind and changing through the seasons, have brought extra beauty to this serene park. Visitors accustomed to seeing the tall grasses have been surprised to see that the meadows were mowed last month. The park mows meadow lands to prevent their gradual conversion to brush and forest. We mow during the winter to avoid injury to grassland birds who will nest here in the spring, and to avoid eliminating cover and food during the breeding season. This winter shearing reveals the “bones” of the landscape, covered now in a warm-brown stubble. When the weather warms, visitors will see hundreds of acres burst into lush green grasses, and watch the gradual growth and transformation of the meadow grasses through the seasons.

Boys and girls, ages 6-12 are invited to *Join the Continental Army*. The final program for 2008 will be held on April 5th. The focus of this program is Artillery. Meet at Tour Stop #8, also called Artillery Park for the April program. For more information contact 610.783.1021 and remember these are outdoor activities, so dress accordingly.

The 3rd Annual Revolutionary Run, held in partnership with the Valley Forge Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Friends of Valley Forge, and 12 other sponsors is scheduled for April 20, 2008. This 5 mile race is sanctioned by Mid-Atlantic USA Track and Field. Race proceeds benefit the care of the park trails network. In addition to the 5 mile race, there is a 3 mile walk, a 1 mile youth fun run, a health and fitness trade fair, and a family expo. The family expo, held during the race for spectators and extending post race, includes refreshments, health and exercise exhibits, as well as park and visitor information. Registration is open for the April 20, 2008 run at www.revolutionaryrun.org. For 2008 there will be **NO** race day registration available.

In February 2007, Valley Forge National Historical Park announced the creation of the PECO Podcast Through History. A PECO grant is being used to create a 10 episode series of podcasts highlighting the history of Valley Forge and the important strides that

were made here by the Continental Army during the winter of 1777-1778. A new episode will appear every two weeks until mid June 2008. Download the series from our website, or visit iTunes to subscribe to the podcast.

The Encampment Store at the Valley Forge Welcome Center has debuted a new audio CD to accompany the self guided driving tour of the park. The brand new CD is the first complete update of the audio driving tour in 20 years and is the result of work by The Encampment Store, park staff, volunteers, partners, and contractors. CD's are for sale in The Encampment Store for \$14.95.

President's Day Weekend events were a resounding success. Over 2,000 Boy Scouts visited the park for the 95th Annual Boy Scout Pilgrimage and Encampment to learn about the Revolutionary War and Valley Forge. In addition, several hundred visitors joined the park on Monday February 18th to celebrate General George Washington's 276th birthday. General and Mrs. Washington were at the Welcome Center to greet visitors. Kids were invited to make birthday cards for General Washington and join a march and revue by the General. Thank you to all the visitors who helped make this President's Day another great event at Valley Forge.

That's all for this month's "View from the Forge." As always, for more information visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/vafo. Please come back next month for a new edition of "The View from the Forge" and remember to look for our other podcasts on iTunes titled Valley Forge History and Culture, and Valley Forge Nature and Science